



April 17, 2007

H.Res. 100 - Expressing the sympathy of House of Representatives to the families of women and girls murdered in Guatemala and encouraging the Government of Guatemala to bring an end to these crimes.

Floor Situation

H.Res. 100 is being considered on the floor under suspension of the rules and will require a two-thirds majority vote for passage. This legislation was introduced by Representative Hilda Solis (D-CA) on January 24, 2007. The bill was considered on March 27, 2007, by the Committee on Foreign Affairs, which agreed, by voice vote, to seek consideration of the bill on the House floor under suspension of the rules.

H.Res. 100 is expected to be considered on the floor on May 1, 2007.

Summary

H.Res. 100 resolves that the House of Representatives:

- Expresses its sincerest condolences and deepest sympathy to the families of women and girls murdered in Guatemala;
- Expresses the solidarity of the people of the United States with the people of Guatemala in the face of these tragic and senseless acts;
- Condemns the ongoing abductions and murders of women and girls in Guatemala which have been occurring with increasing brutality and frequency;
- Recognizes the courageous struggle of the victims' families in seeking justice for the victims;
- Urges the Government of Guatemala to recognize domestic violence and sexual harassment as criminal acts;
- Encourages the Government of Guatemala to act with due diligence in order to investigate promptly the killings of women and girls, prosecute those responsible, and eliminate the tolerance of violence against women;
- Supports efforts to identify perpetrators and unknown victims through forensic analysis, including DNA testing, such as the National Institute for Forensic

Science in Guatemala (INACIF) and encourages such efforts to be conducted by independent, impartial experts;

- Urges the President and Secretary of State to continue to express support for the efforts of the victims' families and loved ones to seek justice for the victims, to express concern relating to the continued harassment of these families and the human rights defenders with whom they work, and to express concern with respect to impediments in the ability of the families to receive prompt and accurate information in their cases;
- Encourages the Secretary of State to urge the Government of Guatemala to honor and dignify the victims of the brutal murders and to continue to include in the Department of State's annual Country Reports on Human Rights Practices all instances of improper investigatory methods, threats against human rights activists, and the use of torture with respect to cases involving the murder and abduction of women and girls in Guatemala;
- Encourages the Secretary of State to urge the Government of Guatemala to hold accountable those law enforcement and judicial officials whose failure to investigate and prosecute the murders adequately, whether through negligence, omission, or abuse, has led to impunity for these crimes;
- Encourages the Secretary of State to support and urge the Government of Guatemala to take measures to ensure that the special Guatemalan police and prosecutorial units have an adequate number of appropriately trained personnel with sufficient resources to conduct thorough and proper investigations and prosecutions that reflect the gravity and magnitude of this national security crisis;
- Recommends that the United States Ambassador to Guatemala continue to meet with the families of the victims, women's rights organizations, and Guatemalan officials responsible for investigating these crimes and preventing such future crimes; and
- Recommends that the Secretary of State develop a comprehensive plan to address and combat the growing problem of violence against women in Latin America.

Background

According to the resolution, since 2001 more than 2,000 women and girls have been abducted, raped, and murdered in Guatemala. The number grew rapidly from 2001 to 2006, where women were killed in much greater numbers than that of their male counterparts. Few arrests have ever been made for these murders.

Guatemala has only recently started to address the issue of violence against women. In June of 2006 they abolished the "Rape Law" which allowed many men to escape jail or

punishment for the raping of women. Guatemala has also recently set up special police forces designed to investigate and prosecute those guilty of crimes against women.

Cost

CBO has not scored this legislation.

Staff Contact

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